

XVI. *Observations upon two antient Etruscan Coins, never before illustrated or explained. In a Letter to the Rev. Thomas Birch, D. D. Secret. R. S. from the Rev. John Swinton, B. D. F. R. S. Member of the Academy degli Apatisti at Florence, and of the Etruscan Academy of Cortona in Tuscany.*

Good Sir,

Read March 29, 1764. **T**WO small Etruscan coins, or weights, came lately into my possession, which I take to have been never hitherto published. Each of them is an uncia, or twelfth part of an as, and in pretty good conservation. The weight, or value, of each piece appears from a single globule on the reverse. As on several accounts they seem to merit the attention of the curious, and have not been yet explained; the Society will indulge me the liberty of imparting to them my sentiments of these valuable coins, and submitting to their consideration a few cursory remarks upon them here. [TAB. XI.]

I.

The first of these medals presents to our view a diademated head, greatly deformed by the injuries of
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time. The workmanship is rude, such as we find it to be in many of the more antient Etruscan coins. The slip of metal projecting from the round of the weight demonstrates the piece to have been cast, and may therefore be considered as a certain indication of it's high antiquity. From the globule and two letters, T V, on the reverse, we may infer this coin to have been a slips uncialis of the Tudertes, or people of Tuder, ΤΟΥΔΕΡ, as this antient city of Italy seems to have been called by (1) Strabo. It is at present known by the name of Todi. It went under the denomination of Tutere (2) amongst the Etruscans, and is pointed out to us by the letters T V, as here, on (3) several of their earlier coins.

That this piece is an Etruscan weight of very considerable antiquity, seems likewise evident from the barbarous and uncouth taste that appears in every part of it, in conjunction with the manner of writing, from the right hand to the left, visible on it, which antiently prevailed over all the (4) lucumonies of Etruria. The figure on the reverse, however rude and inelegant it may be, was perhaps intended to represent the prow of a ship, so frequently to be met with on this minute sort of coins. For a particular and satisfactory account of the early origin of

(1) Strab. *Geograph. Lib. x. Sil. Ital.*

(2) Anton. Francisc. *Gor. Mus. Etrusc.* p. 162, 427. Florentiæ, 1737.

(3) Anton. Francisc. *Gor. ubi sup.* p. 427. Honor. Arigon. *Num. Urb. et Populor. Hetrur.* Tab. VII, VIII, VIII, &c. Tarvisii, 1745.

(4) Phil. Bonarot. *Ad Monument. Etrusc. Oper. Dempst. Addit. Explicat. & Conject.* § xlii. p. 90. Florentiæ, 1726.

such cast pieces (5) as this, recourse may be had to the very learned authors referred to here.

With regard to the diademated head on this piece, I shall only beg leave to observe, that a similar one occurs on an antient Etruscan coin published by (6) Arigoni, on a very old medal of Rome now in my possession (7), and undoubtedly on several other valuable pieces of a very remote antiquity, to be met with in the cabinets of the learned. This small Etruscan uncia weighs precisely three penny weights and one grain.

That the weight, or coin, I have been considering was current in Etruria long before the people of that country found themselves obliged to submit to the Roman yoke, will not, I think, admit of a dispute; but how many years it preceded that wherein the battle of the Lacus Vadimonis (8), so ruinous to the Etruscans, was fought, for want of sufficient light, both from history and the medal itself, I must not take upon me to decide.

II.

The second piece exhibits on one side the head of Hercules, adorned with a lion's skin, behind which a fish, resembling the turso, or tyrso, appears, attended by three Etruscan letters well enough preserved. On the reverse a dolphin, or tyrso, part of an anchor, and another fish, under the former, present themselves

(5) Idem ibid. § xxxviii. p. 78. Anton. Francisc. Gor. ubi sup. p. 421. *Una Lettera Al Signor Abate Barthelemy di Annibale degli Abati Olivieri*, p. 27. In Pefaro, 1757.

(6) Honor. Arigon. ubi sup. Tab. XIV, XVI.

(7) See Plate Fig.

(8) T. Liv. *Historiar. ab Urbe Cond. Lib. ix.*

to our view. The other part of the anchor and the fish appertaining to it have been defaced, by the injuries of time; as we may collect from a similar *stips uncialis* formerly published by F. Montfaucon, then in the cabinet of the Marshal d'Estrées. A single globule, or uncial mark, determining the weight, or value, of the piece, is also visible here. The workmanship is somewhat rude, and different from that of the Romans. The *tyrso* seems to allude to the origin and most antient name of the Etruscans, who were called *Tyrſenians* by the Greek writers that flourished before Polybius (10). That fish not seldom (11) occurs on the Etruscan coins. It is thought to have been one of the distinguishing sym-

(9) Montfaucon. *Supplem. de l'Antiquit. Expliqu.* Tom. III. Liv. iv. c. 6. Pl. 48. p. 106. A Paris, 1724.

(10) Boch. *Chan.* Lib. I. c. xxxiii. p. 647, 648. Francofurti ad Moenum, 1681. Phil. Bonarot. *Ad Monument. Etrusc. Explicat. & Conject.* § xxxviii. p. 80. Florentiæ, 1726. Anton. Francisc. Gor. *Mus. Etrusc.* Vol. II. p. 421. Florentiæ, 1737.

(11) Phil. Bonarot. *ubi sup.* § xxxviii. Ant. Fran. Gor. *ubi sup.* p. 421. I have an exceeding fine Etruscan weight, or brass medal, of Volterra, adorned with the head of Janus on one side, done after the Etruscan manner; and on the reverse with a *tyrso*, the obelus, or mark of the *as*, and seven Etruscan letters, forming the word *VELITHERA*, or *VELITERA*, the old Etruscan name of Volterra, one of the most antient cities of Tuscany. The piece is in the finest conservation, and weighs four ounces, fifteen penny weights, and eighteen grains.

It is farther remarkable for a figure of the *A*, which I never met with, before this weight fell into my hands, upon any of the Etruscan remains of antiquity. One of the sides of that element here is much shorter than the other, not unlike the form of the Greek *Alpha* exhibited by some of the earliest Athenian tetradrachms, particularly one in my possession, the most antient of any that I have hitherto seen.

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bols of the Tyrsenian nation, with which the people of it were very well pleased.

The forms of the letters on this medal are exactly the same with those of the correspondent elements used in Umbria and the Proper Etruria, and apparently answer to the Roman letters FAI. They are sufficiently clear and distinct, having suffered little from the injuries of time. The word they represent, in conformity to the Etruscan (12) manner, points out to us some remarkable town. This may be certainly evinced from the inscriptions preserved on other Etruscan coins. Now to what town can this word be supposed as a proper name to refer, but to Fæsulæ in the Proper Etruria? That city stood at the foot of the Apennines, and was one of the most (13) antient, as well as the most considerable, towns of Etruria. The Greeks wrote the name of it (14) ΦΑΙΣΟΥΛΑΙ and (15) ΦΑΙΣΟΛΑ, the earlier Latins (16) FAISVLAI,

Hence it should seem to appear, that this valuable Etruscan coin has never yet been published, at least with a sufficient degree of exactness. I therefore judged it would be by no means improper to send the Society a draught of it, as well as one of the Athenian tetradrachm here mentioned, taken with the utmost accuracy, and such as may be entirely depended upon.

Vid. Annib. degl. Abat. Olivier. ubi sup. p. 43.

(12) Anton. Francisc. Gor. ubi sup. p. 422-431. Joan. Baptist. Passer. Pisaurenf. *De Num. Etrusc. Pæstanor. Dissertat.* Vid. *Symbol. Litterar.* Vol. II. p. 13-35. Florentiæ, 1748.

(13) Tho. Dempst. *De Etrur. Regal. Lib.* IV. c. XIX. & alibi, Florentiæ, 1724.

(14) Appian. Alexandrin. *De Bell. Civil.* Lib. II. p. 711. Amstel. 1670. Dio, Lib. XXXVII.

(15) Polyb. *Histor.* Lib. II. c. 25. p. 158. Amstel. 1670.

(16) Enn. & Lucret. passim; Virg. Joh. Nicol. Func. Marburgens. *De Adolescent. Latin. Ling. Tractat.* p. 325. Marburgi Cattorum, 1723.

and those of the Augustan age *FAESVLAE*. The diphthong *AI* at first prevailed amongst the Latins, as well as the Greeks; but was afterwards converted by them into *Æ*, or *AE*.

That the Etruscans used globules on their coins, to denote the weight or value of them, has been observed by the most celebrated (17) antiquaries, and is now universally allowed. From them the custom of impressing these marks upon money and weights passed to the Romans. Now *Fæsulæ* was one of the most famous and antient cities of Etruria. Nay, with its district, according to a (18) very eminent writer, it formed one of the twelve *lucumonies*, or free states, of that country; and, in support of this sentiment, it may be remarked, that several valuable remains of (19) Etruscan antiquity have been found near the spot formerly occupied by that city. A mint was therefore undoubtedly erected there, and money coined in it. The situation of this place, at a small distance from the Arno, and not far from the Tyrrhenian Sea, may be considered as an additional reason why a *turso*, or *tyrso*, should have sometimes been impressed on its coins.

The age of the piece before me I cannot take upon me, with any precision, to determine; but think it must have been emitted from the mint at *Fæsulæ*, before the final subjugation of Etruria by the Romans.

(17) Phil. Bonarot. ubi sup. Honor. Arigon. *Num. Urb. & Populor. Hetrur. Antiquissim.* Tarvisii, 1745.

(18) Dempst. ubi sup. et alibi. Vid. etiam Cluver. *Cellar. &c.*

(19) Anton. Francisc. Gor. ubi sup. p. 19, 112, 435.

We may therefore reasonably presume it to have appeared before the reduction of that country to the form of a province by the consul Ti. Coruncanius, in the year of Rome 473; if not before the terrible overthrow given the Etruscans by the consul Æmilius Barbula, in the year 442, which seems to have put a period to the independency of that nation. If we admit this, the coin cannot well be supposed to have preceded the birth of CHRIST less than three hundred years. Nay, it may be of a much earlier date, if the learned (20) Sig. Gori's notion of the high antiquity of the brass Etruscan coins be not altogether remote from truth. Be this as it will, no one has yet fully disproved or invalidated his opinion.

From the coin here considered, I think, we may venture to infer, that the manner of adorning with the head of Hercules some of the lesser weights was (21) originally Etruscan, but adopted afterwards by the Romans. The people of Fæsulæ and the neighbouring tract undoubtedly formed one of the twelve lucumonies, or cantons, of Etruria, and even made a figure after the Etruscan times. A colony was settled here by (22) Sylla, and the inhabitants of this place seem to have enjoyed the privileges of a municipium in the days of (23) Pliny. Other points, besides those already mentioned, are clearly deducible from the medal I

(20) Idem ibid. p. 419. Phil. Bonarot. ubi sup.

(21) Anton. Francisc. Gor. ubi sup. p. 424, 425. Phil. Bonarot. ubi sup.

(22) Cic. in *Catilin.* Orat. III.

(23) Plin. *Nat. Hist.* Lib. VII. c. XIII. p. 381. Ed. Hard. Parisiis, 1723.

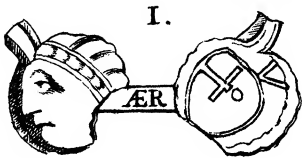
have been endeavouring to explain, the only one of Fæfulæ hitherto discovered, which at present I cannot so much as touch upon; having but just time to assure you that I am, with the most perfect consideration and esteem,

S I R,

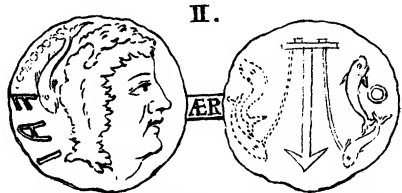
Your most obedient humble servant,

Christ-Church, Oxon,
May 31st, 1763.

John Swinton.



Penes Joannem Swinton, STB. Oxoniens. R.S.S.



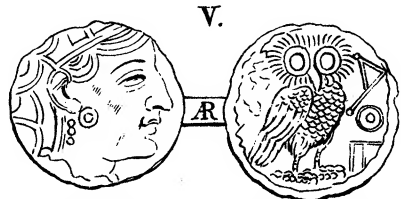
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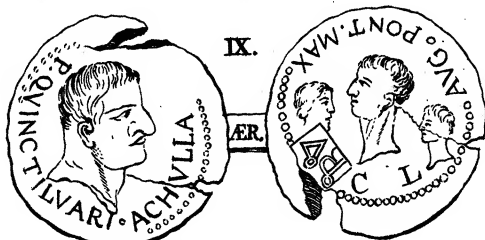
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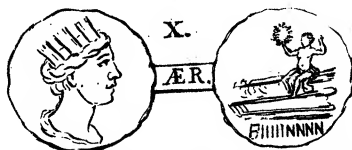
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